

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE COUNCIL'S REPORT

1. The ninety-fourth meeting of the Fort George G. Meade Retiree Council was held at 2234 Huber Road, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, at 9:00 am on 11 December 2004. In accordance with AR 600-8-7, this report of the meeting is submitted:

a. The following members were present:

COL Bert L. Rice, USA Ret (Chairman)
SGM Kenneth L. McCall Sr., USA Ret (Co-Chairman)
COL Charles M. Shadle, USA Ret (Aberdeen)
COL Edward H. Uemura, USA Ret
LTC Louis F. Schneider, USA Ret
LtCDR Sam L. Bridwell, USN Ret (Western MD)
MAJ William S. Heath, USA Ret
CPT Arthur N. Rogers III, USA Ret
CSM Barry Decker, USA Ret (Aberdeen)
SGM J. Paul Funk, USA Ret
SGM James Gilbert, USA Ret
1SG Richard Gilliam, USA Ret
MSG James W. Lickliter, USA Ret
SFC Carlo DePorto, USA Ret
MSGT Charles E. Plummer, USAF Ret
SSG Walter B. Hollman, Sr., USA Ret
MRS. Catherine Eckford
MRS. Cecille Morse

2. The meeting was called to order with a welcome from COL Rice. The invocation was given by SFC DePorto followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance led by COL Rice.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

a. COL Rice reviewed the minutes of 28 August 2004, which was accepted by the Council. He also addressed the following:

(1) Surviving Spouse Benefits Symposium scheduled for 11 June 2005. A flyer to be used for registration was distributed and discussed. Mrs. Morse provided additional information relative to the event emphasizing that it was not only for survivors, but those interested in the topic as well.

(2) Issues for the Army Chief of Staff Council. Two are being considered for submittal:

- (a) Support of Soldiers wounded/injured as a result of the war on terrorism, and their families. The need for the Department of Defense and Congress to establish a definitive program to address the needs of the aforementioned when they return to their hometowns is paramount and must be pursued in an effort to help them assimilate into a society that not is fully supportive of the War on Terrorism. Since many may be married, assistance is needed for their families as well. A program, "America Supports You" (AmericaSupportsYou.mil), has taken the initiative in this area and could be contacted to help organize a national program. A copy of the proposed issue was distributed.
 - (b) Assault by the American Civil Liberties Union relative Scouting programs on military installations. It is recognized that the military cannot sponsor subject programs, but they can support them. Scouting provides the young with an opportunity to excel in all walks of life and since many of our national and military leaders have risen from their ranks, it is imperative that we provide visible support for the continuing support of this outstanding program.
- (3) COL Rice introduced the following guest:
- (a) COL (USA Ret) Bernard Cullen, the Installation AG, who extended a greeting from COL John Ives, Installation Commander, and discussed the following:
 - Mr. Ashley (RSO) additional responsibilities as the "senior civilian" for building 2234 Huber Road.
 - The ID Card section now under the supervision of Mr. Ashley, is working well.

- The Garrison is losing many of its military population to the "Unit of Action" program and their slots will be filled by civilian employees.
- The retiree newsletter should be on the streets much quicker than before since modifications have been made to the mailing process.
- Suggested that the issue for the Army Chief of Staff Council that pertains to the support of casualties from the War on Terrorism, be shared with the "Military Coalition" so that they could address the concern as well.

(b) LTC Shelby Bell, Commander, Headquarters Command Battalion, addressed the following:

- The vehicle lock out problem experienced by LTCDR Bridwell as reported in the minutes of 5 June 2004, was discussed with the Military Police and as a result, their procedure for "assist calls" has been revised resulting in their being able to assist motorist under certain conditions. (LTC Bell was thanked for her assistance in bringing this matter to resolution.)
- On 21 December 2004, the installation will play host to some of the Walter Reed Army Hospital patients who are casualties of the War on Terrorism. They will be entertained at the Post Bowling Alley and other places of interest. (SGM McCall asked whether or not any of the casualties from the war were being housed at Fort Meade. LTC Bell reported that approximately 26 ambulatory patients were housed in local barracks.)

NOTE: COL Rice departed at 9:39 am to participate in a local civic event, but introduced the Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Clinic representative prior to his departure. SGM McCall continued the meeting.

- (c) COL Bryant, Deputy CDR, Nursing, KACC, after giving greetings from the KACC Commander, COL Mielcarek, the following was rendered:
- A review of current policies and the priorities that were placed into effect in order to support the Joint Medical Readiness Clinic that is providing service to 7500 military in cooperation with other clinics. This has not affected the care to military retirees and family members currently enrolled in the KACC programs.
 - Flu shots were being administered to those identified as being in the "high risk" group.
 - Physical Therapy for patients 65 and older, with a doctor's consultation, may be able to participate in the KACC programs.
 - Expressed thanks to the many Red Cross volunteers who are a part of the military retiree community for their many hours of volunteer work at the KACC.
 - Accepted questions from attendees:
 - (1) COL Uemura expressed concern relative to the problems associated with trying to call KACC for an appointment and not being able to get through. (The problem had been identified and the system is being upgraded to include a toll free number for those who must now make long distance calls to contact KACC.)
 - (2) SGM Gilbert expressed concern relative to the Pharmacy, its prescription windows and being bumped by active duty having prescriptions filled. (As inconvenient as it may be, it is necessary and required by the Joint Readiness policy.)

COL Bryant expressed her appreciation for being given the opportunity to address the Council and looked forward to joining us again in the future. She also stated that the Consumer Council was being revived which was good news to COL Uemura, who is looking forward to serving on it again. COL Bryant departed at 10:15 am.

4. RSO REMARKS: Mr. Ashley reported on the following:
 - a. The success of our recently completed Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) programs and on the many contributions and support. (The Council extended the same courtesy to Mr. Ashley and his staff for the time, effort and dedication required bringing another successful RAD to the community.
 - b. Planning for the next RAD is underway and currently scheduled for the weekend of 16 and 17 September 2005. And since it is our 30th event, special programs/events are being evaluated. Suggestions from the Council are being solicited.
 - c. His office is receiving a new employee (a military retiree) who will commence work in January 2005.
 - d. Guides and maps of Fort Meade were made available to the Council and are being distributed throughout the installation as well.
 - e. The positive effect that resulted from the efforts put forth by the retired military community that led to the removal of the Survivors Benefit Program off-set policy that is being phased out starting in October 2005.
 - f. Articles for the summer edition of our newsletters are due to his office by 1 May 2005.
5. OLD BUSINESS: Surviving Spouse Benefits Symposium. Mrs. Morse addressed questions from meeting attendees relative to the event and stated that it would be high publicized.
6. NEW BUSINESS:
 - a. COL Shadle (APG), reported on the transition that TRICARE is undergoing which includes an upgrade in its program. He also stated that TRICARE is enforcing its generic prescription policy which will result in the reduction in the use of name brand medicines.

- b. LTCDR Bridwell stated that it appears as if military retirees are paying more for mail order prescriptions and cited several examples. He is to obtain more specifics and render a report at the next Council meeting.
7. APG UPDATE: COL Shadle commented on the installations RAD, which was very well attended, and the support provided for same. He also suggested that statistics should be compiled Army-wide that would provide an attendance comparison by installation. (Comparisons would have to be made between like installations - Fort Meade compared with Fort Bragg would not be a fair comparison.)
8. WESTERN MARYLAND UPDATE: LtCDR Bridwell had nothing to report.
9. KIMBROUGH ADVISORY COUNCIL: COL Uemura provided positive remarks on COL Bryant's presentation and her invitation to visit her whenever we are at the KACC
10. ARMY FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD: Mrs. Morse had nothing additional to report.
11. FORT MEADE COMMISSARY COUNCIL: SGM Funk had nothing to report.
12. CO-CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: SGM McCall reported on the following:
- a. Thanked those that contributed door prizes for the RAD, COL Uemura; SSG Hollman; Mr. Ashley; Mrs. Eckford; Commissary; Post Exchange; MWR.
 - b. A proposed rule listed in the Federal Register, issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which would amend its regulations relating to accrued benefits, death compensation, and certain special rules applicable upon the death of a VA beneficiary. Comments were sought on the proposal which is now under review.
 - c. A final rule listed in the Federal Register that was amended and adopted by VA that allows for benefits to be made payable for additional disability or death caused by VA hospital care, medical or surgical treatment, examination, training and rehabilitation services, or compensated work therapy program only if VA fault or an event not reasonably foreseeable proximately caused the disability or death.

- d. From the Federal Register, a final rule adopted by the Social Security Administration which was made effective in May 2000, that provides monthly benefits to certain World War II veterans who reside outside of the United States, and cites specific information that must be provided in order to be eligible for same.
- e. The "Living History" program organized and conducted by Ms. Jaime Miller, a teacher at Fort Meade's MacArthur Middle School, for Veterans Day, 11 November 2004. Several council members participated and as in past programs that she developed, it was an overwhelming success. SGM McCall recommended that we honor her in some way for her many contributions towards ensuring that our youth meet those of us that made military history. He also asked for other Council members to participate in her future programs. (LTC Schneider expressed an interest.)
- f. The council meeting schedule for calendar year 2005 was established as follows:
 - Saturday, 5 March 2005
 - Saturday, 4 June 2005
 - Saturday, 27 August 2005
 - Saturday, 3 December 2005

Note: Circumstances/events may require the schedule to be modified.

13. GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION:

- a. Ms. Morse suggested that in support of planned events, tables could be manned at the Commissary and Post Exchange where information flyers could be distributed. Also, the Fort Meade web-site and television station could be used.
- b. MSGT Plummer remarked on his previous concern relative to vehicle speeding on Rothenbach Road. (COL Cullen and LTC Bell will look into same.)
- c. LTCDR Bridwell commented on the confusion caused by not knowing which of the installations gates are open for entry and affects those visiting Fort Meade.
- d. SGM Gilbert remarked on the recent absences of representatives from the commissary and post exchange at our meetings. He also commented on the closing of the cashier's cage at the post exchange and the possible problems that patrons could encounter.
- e. MAJ Heath suggested that those desiring to speak at our meetings, position themselves at the front of the room so that they could be heard.

- f. COL Uemura stated that KACC patients having medical appointments at other medical treatment facilities (MTF), can now hand-carry their medical records to same.
- g. CSM Decker provided a news article and commented on the recent activation of the 20th Support Command (CBRNE) created by the Army to serve as its command and control element and provider of US based chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive ordinance operational response teams and technical augmentation cells world-wide.
- h. SFC DePorto remarked on his selection by the USO to assist in packing and wrapping packages at Fort Belvoir, to be sent abroad, and his meeting with President and Mrs. Bush who assisted in the project.

13. SGM McCall thanked all in attendance for their continued support and valuable service they provide to those whom they represent.

14. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am with a reminder that the next meeting of the Council is scheduled for 9 am, Saturday, 5 March 2005, at 2234 Huber Road, Fort Meade.

BERT L. RICE
COL, USA Ret
Chairman, Fort Meade
Retiree Council

KENNETH L. MCCALL, SR.
SGM, USA Ret
Co-Chairman, Fort Meade
Retiree Council